

Bibb County School District Code of Conduct **Attendance Posting**

What are Bibb County's rules for attendance and why?

Students are expected to be present at the appointed hour for the beginning of school and to leave the school premises at the end of the school day. Parents are expected to see to it that their children abide by this policy.

Our District has unified bell times: Elementary, 8:45am-3:15pm; Middle, 7:50am-2:40pm; High, 7:30am-2:30pm. The School District is not responsible for the supervision and safety of students prior to the beginning of the school day or after the end of the school day.

Car riders and walkers should not be dropped off or remain on campus more than 30 minutes before or after the school day. Repeated failure (minimum 3 or more times) to abide by this policy may result in the referral of the case to the Department of Family and Children Services.

The school district emphasizes the value of regular attendance in enabling students to benefit from the school program. Georgia law requires all children to attend school on a daily basis from their sixth (6th) birthday through their sixteenth (16th) birthday. It is the responsibility of each student as well as each parent or guardian of children in Georgia to fulfill this requirement.

More important, however, is the effect of regular and punctual attendance on the student's scholastic achievement. Not only is each day's lesson important to the individual student, but his/her presence as a class participant contributes to the education of others. Frequent absences and tardies for any reason are almost certain to affect adversely a student's schoolwork. Each student is expected to be in school every day except when illness, injury, or some providential condition beyond his/her control prevents attendance.

Excused Absences

Students may be temporarily excused from school by the principal in the following circumstances:

- Serious illness or hospitalization, including maternity confinement and delivery;
- Serious illness or death in the immediate family which would reasonably necessitate absence from school;
- Special and recognized religious holidays observed by the student's faith;
- Court orders or mandates by order of governmental agencies, including pre-induction physical examinations for the armed forces;
- Conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to student health or safety;
- Absences related to school or school sponsored activities;

- Georgia law provides up to five (5) days excused absences for students whose parents are in the armed forces who are called to duty or home on leave from overseas deployment in a combat zone.
- Other circumstances where the parent or guardian makes prior arrangements with the building principal for their child to be absent from school, i.e., one day for registering to vote or voting in a public election (mandated by new school attendance law), college visits, serving as a legislative page, and other special family occasions;
- Students who are absent due to serious illness or hospitalization, and meet the requirements as outlined for hospital homebound services, will receive these services after the parent or school files the eligibility paperwork. Please refer to **the Georgia Compulsory Attendance law, Appendix B on page 79** in the Student Code of Conduct.

Process: absences shall be considered “excused” and shall not penalize student grades if the following conditions are met:

- Students who desire to document an absence shall present a written excuse signed by a parent or guardian within three (3) days of returning to school. **Failure to present an excuse within three (3) days shall result in an unexcused absence.** Documentation presented after three (3) days will not be considered. Parent excuses may not be sent by FAX, e-mail, or telephone. Documentation from other agencies/organizations will be accepted upon verification by school attendance personnel.
 - **NOTE:** Any student found to have submitted an excuse falsely presented as being from a parent or guardian will be subject to school discipline. Absences covered by such false excuse will be deemed unexcused and no make-up work will be accepted.
- The principal or designee will determine whether or not an absence is excused, and may, at his/her discretion, require supporting documentation from doctor, dentist, clinic, court, funeral home, etc. in order to make this determination. The decision of the principal or designee with respect to the justification and validity of proffered documentation for an absence is final.
- Students shall be given a reasonable opportunity, not exceeding five (5) days, to make up work or tests which were missed because of an excused absence from school. It is the student’s responsibility to arrange to make up work. Failure to make-up work after a reasonable time will result in a grade of 0.

Disciplinary Absences

Absences resulting from disciplinary suspensions shall be excused for purposes of this policy. Students assigned to in-school suspension are considered to be in attendance at school.

- When a student is suspended from school, a parent or guardian may pick up all make-up assignments that are assigned during a period of suspension. These must

be completed and submitted no later than the fifth (5) day following the student's return from suspension. Failure to make up work within five (5) days will result in a grade of 0.

- Work assigned prior to the start of a suspension and due during the suspension shall be accepted and graded if submitted by the suspended student's parent or guardian or other representative on the due date.
- Work assigned during a student's suspension to be due after the suspension shall be accepted for grading on the due date.

Consequences of Unexcused Absences

Unexcused absences will result in the following consequences:

1. Students in grades K-8 who exceed **ten (10) unexcused absences** in a school year will not be promoted to the next grade level.
2. Students in grades 9-12 who exceed **five (5) unexcused absences** in any semester-long class will not receive credit for the course. Students in grades 9-12 who take year-long classes and exceed ten (10) unexcused absences will not receive credit for the course.
3. When a student reaches **three (3) unexcused absences**, the Bibb County School District will notify the parent or guardian of the child explaining the penalties and consequences of any further absences.
4. When a student reaches **seven (7) unexcused absences**, the Office of School Social Services will send a certified letter informing the student and parents that three (3) days remain before the school district will take action.
5. Students who demonstrate a **pattern of unexcused absences and tardiness** will be referred to the Office of Student Support Services for appropriate intervention that may include a charge of truancy being filed against a parent and/or student.
6. **Court-related Consequences:** Court-related penalties may include subjecting the parent/guardian to criminal misdemeanor charges. Upon conviction thereof, parent/guardian may be subject to fine not less than \$25.00 and not greater than \$100.00 or imprisonment not to exceed 30 days, community services, or any combination of such penalties, at the discretion of the court having jurisdiction (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.1). After the student's school system notifies the parent/guardian of five unexcused days of absence, each day's absence from school in violation of this provision shall constitute a separate offense (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.1(c)).
7. **Loss of a Driver's License:** The School District is required to report to the Georgia Department of Motor Vehicle Safety, Driver's License Bureau, certain violations of the Code of Conduct which may lead to restrictions being placed on the student's driving privileges. Violations which must be reported include: dropping out of school, exceeding **ten (10) unexcused absences** in a semester, and cumulative suspension of more than ten (10) days.
 - **IMPORTANT NOTE:** Students 15-17 years of age are reminded that excessive unexcused absences could result in suspension of their ability to operate a motor vehicle under the Teenage and Adult Driver

Responsibility Act.

8. The Bibb County School District will withdraw students who have missed more than **ten (10) consecutive days due to unexcused absences**, who are not subject to compulsory attendance, who have not responded to efforts to get them to return to school, and who are not receiving instructional services from the local school system through homebound instruction or instructional services required by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Action (IDEA). School social services staff will use their best efforts to notify the parent(s), guardian(s), or other person(s) who has charge of a student if the school system plans to withdraw such student who is younger than 18 years of age and is not subject to compulsory school attendance.

Students Who Withdraw From School Between Their 16th and 18th Birthdays: A student who is unemancipated and is between his or her 16th and 18th birthday who has not completed all requirements for a high school diploma and who wishes to withdraw from school shall have the written permission of his or her parent or legal guardian prior to withdrawing. Prior to accepting such permission, the school principal or designee shall convene a conference with the student and parent or legal guardian within two school days of receiving notice of the intent of the student to withdraw from school. The principal or designee shall make a reasonable attempt to share with the student and parent or guardian the educational options available, including the opportunity to pursue a general education development (GED) diploma and the consequences of not having earned a high school diploma, including lower lifetime earnings, fewer jobs for which the student will be qualified, and the inability to avail oneself of higher educational opportunities. **Be reminded that dropping out of school could result in the suspension of the ability to operate a motor vehicle.**

Notification Regarding Possible Consequences and Penalties for Violation of the Compulsory Attendance Statute or Certain Provisions of the Code of Conduct.

The Georgia Compulsory Attendance law provides in part:

Every parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of any child between their sixth and sixteenth birthdays shall enroll and send such child to school or a home study program. Such child shall be responsible for enrolling in and attending school or a home study program under penalty for noncompliance, unless the child's failure to enroll and attend is caused by the child's parent, guardian, or other person, in which case the parent, guardian, or other person alone shall be responsible. Approved absences may be excused. The requirement to attend school also applies to any student assigned to the Alternative School.

Any parent, guardian, or other person residing in this state who does not enroll and send any child who is in their control or charge and is between their 6th and 16th birthday to school will be guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction shall be

subject to the following penalties at the discretion of the Court:

- **a fine not less than \$25 and not greater than \$100;**
- **imprisonment not to exceed 30 days;**
- **community service;•or any combination of the above.**

Each day's absence from school in violation of the compulsory attendance laws after the school district notifies the parent, guardian, or other person who has control or charge of a child of five unexcused days of absence for a child shall constitute a separate offense.

In addition to possible criminal penalties for violations of the compulsory attendance law, the School District is required to report to the Georgia Department of Motor Vehicles certain violations of the attendance rules and the Code of Conduct which may lead to placing restrictions on a student's driving privileges including suspension of a driving license for up to one year or until the student's eighteenth birthday. Violations which must be reported include: dropping out of school, exceeding ten (10) unexcused absences in a semester, and cumulative suspensions out of school of more than ten (10) days. The School District must also report a student's suspension or expulsion for any of the following: threats or actual violence toward any school district personnel or their property, possession and/or sale of drugs or alcohol, possession and/or use of a weapon, sexual offenses, and causing bodily harm or disfigurement.